

JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL
FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
1701 Directors Blvd., Suite 600
Austin, TX 78744
2. Description of Action: The proposed action is for a one-year firm-fixed-price (FFP) task order to be issued under Veterans Technology Services (VETS) Government Wide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) contract number: GS-06-F-0528Z, for technical services, training, and maintenance of Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) satellite communications hub equipment and to support existing VSAT units.
3. Description of Supplies or Services: The VSAT network is an enterprise system that provides contingent voice, video, and data communications services via Internet Protocol. VA currently uses VSAT communications infrastructure inclusive of the satellite transponder operation, Radio Frequency (RF) chain components, teleport collocation services, hub operations, and hub hardware/firmware components required to deliver private dedicated VSAT services throughout VA. The existing hub operations managed network services must support 36 MHz, or better, operations for the RF outbound chain. Transponder operations, hub operations, and hub components must be maintained as they are currently configured and operated. Additionally, the following services are required: configuration, activation, and training for 30 VSAT units. The total estimated value of the proposed action is \$9,384,230.11.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting an exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C. 4106(c) as implemented by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Subpart 16.505(b)(2)(i)(C), entitled "The order must be issued on a sole-source basis in the interest of economy and efficiency because it is a logical follow-on to an order already issued under the contract, provided that all awardees were given a fair opportunity to be considered for the original order".
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: The proposed source for this action is Veterans Corps of America, 3264 Whispering Pines Drive, Belleville, IL 62221-8816. The aforementioned VSAT support services and maintenance must continue for the next year to ensure VSAT remains operational. Veterans Corps of America has significant knowledge of the current VSAT system that has provided these services to VA and has a working process in place which will ensure seamless continuity of services. If this effort is competed and another vendor is selected, additional risk would be incurred since the new contractor's staff will not fully understand the complex requirements included in this application within the specified timeframe. Specifically, any source, other than Veterans Corps of America, would have to duplicate efforts already performed by Veterans Corps of America to complete the VSAT maintenance services and would result in substantial delivery delays and increased cost. Additionally, any new vendor coming in would have to re-engineer and re-design the

whole VSAT satellite network. For example, the new vendor would have to completely build from scratch, the helpdesk, and may have to build and configure different hubs to work with the type of modem used. Also, Veterans would not receive the continuity of operations of data, voice, and video communications for Mobile Vet Centers (MVCs). MVCs require the portable satellite systems support to provide daily care for Veterans and also in the event of National declared emergencies.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in the market research section of this document. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. There is no competition anticipated for this acquisition. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2), this action will be synopsisized at award on the Federal Business Opportunities Page (FBO) and the justification will be made publicly available.

7. Actions to Increase Competition: The upcoming Next Generation Satellite Communications (NGSC) contract is currently under development and has a tentative award date of March 27, 2013. The NGSC will include the deployment of VSAT network services and will be competed on the General Services Administration (GSA) Schedule 70 Commercial Satellite Communications (COMSATCOM) under categories 132 54 Transponded Capacity and 132 55 Subscription Services.

8. Market Research: The Government's technical experts performed market research by issuing two Requests for Information (RFI's). The first RFI was issued September 27, 2012, on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement IV Government Wide Acquisition Contract for sources that can provide the aforementioned services.